

de más la recomendación que escribe Gadamer en *Los caminos de Heidegger* (p. 416) al referirse a este otro filósofo alemán: «la vida es brumosa» (*diesig*). Y es que si omitimos las consideraciones de Gadamer en cuanto al diálogo que se mantiene con el poema, podemos llegar a pensar que este lo concibe como *dies hier*, es decir, como esto que hay aquí y que, por tanto, podría desvelarse en su totalidad a través de la mediación del lector (inter)medio; mientras que tal como pasa con los caminos de bosque (*Holzwege*) heideggerianos, el lector debe practicar la reflexión a sabiendas que en ocasiones hay que darse la vuelta y regresar de algunos senderos que no llevan a ninguna parte al estar uno frente al *diesig*, a la bruma.

Para finalizar, cabe señalar lo que escribe Gadamer en *Verdad y método*: «El que me encarece mucho la recons-

trucción e insiste en la diferencia, se encuentra al comienzo de un diálogo, no al final» (p. 359). Y es que en esas palabras dedicadas a Derrida encontramos la posición conciliadora de Gadamer, quien, lejos de buscar realizar comentarios fijos y atemporales para los poemas de «Atemkristall», resulta sabedor de lo difícil que resulta abarcar a ese erizo que para Derrida resulta ser la poesía y al que Caner-Liese se enfrenta en su obra. En cuanto a las acotaciones y comentarios que el autor realiza a los poemas comentados por Gadamer, sin duda el lector podrá decidir por sí mismo, y seguramente lo más interesante de la obra sea la invitación al lector a acercarse a esos dos grandes que son Hans-Georg Gadamer y Paul Celan.

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CORSE, Sandra (2009)

*Craft Objects, Aesthetic Contexts - Kant, Heidegger and Adorno on Craft*  
Plymouth, UK: University Press of America, 100 p.

This book is an attempt to address the philosophical relevance of craft objects and practices and will be of interest for those wishing to revisit the readings of Kant, Heidegger and Adorno on art and aesthetics from a different standpoint. The book is original for its efforts to provide a philosophical basis to the reflections about craft (which is considered in the fields of anthropology and history of art, but seldom in philosophy) and to provide a revision of the previous readings of these authors from the standpoint of craft rather than art. Nevertheless, because of the rather risky approach of focusing the attention, differently from traditional art-biased aesthetics, on craft, at times it has also a number of problems that ought to be pointed out. However, even

if this is so, it is worthwhile considering this reading from Sandra Corse, retired lecturer from the School of Literature, Communication and Culture at Georgia Tech in Atlanta. This book, edited by the renowned University Press of America, will be useful for elementary and more specialised courses in aesthetics, in order to update and bring to awareness certain traditional (and often partial) interpretations of the authors presented in this book.

Corse divides her book into four main chapters. The first chapter focuses on explaining and justifying the reasons for conducting a philosophical reflection on craft. The rest of the chapters respectively summarise the theories of Kant, Heidegger and Adorno. Corse's aim is to

demonstrate the relevance of these theories to better understand what craft is and how it relates to aesthetic and cognitive experiences.

The first chapter is perhaps the most interesting for those not familiarised with contemporary craft objects and theories. The chapter is divided in two parts: the first addresses the current debate, concerning what craft is and how it relates to art. The second part is an effort to clarify the current debate in analytic philosophy, concerning what art is and how it relates to craft.

In the first part of the first chapter, Corse clarifies some conceptual and historical distinctions concerning craft. She also introduces some of the theories developed by Risatti, Greenhalgh and Metcalf concerning the current debate about what craft is (i.e., definitions of craft). In this section Corse also considers that it is necessary to distinguish between contemporary Studio Craft, based on the Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th century, which rejected industrialisation and mass manufacture, from the more traditional craft practices, which simply aimed at producing goods for daily life. In doing this, she insists her addressing to the former type of craft, which she claims is a new division of art. Often to dispel any misunderstandings she refers to this former type of craft as «Studio Craft» or «Fine Craft» (in order to draw a better parallel to «Fine Art»).

Through her summary of Risatti's, Metcalf's and Greenhalgh's definitions of craft, she attempts to find not only the similarities between Fine Craft and Fine Art, but also to find their differences. She also attempts to counter Collingwood's type of ideas about craft (as considered less valuable than art). To do so, she also insists that Fine Craft is actually a division of art, and thus is also as valuable as Fine Art. However, she also claims that differently to Fine Art, Fine (or Studio) Craft stresses other equally acceptable val-

ues, such as the role of historical materials and techniques as well as the central role of the hand-made manufacture, its place in everydayness and its provision of a more functional and thus more affordable understanding of the world. It is also relevant that she points out the fact that contemporary (fine) artists are also currently turning towards craft techniques and materials to produce their artworks, thus providing additional reasons for considering the study of craft objects, practices and theories in contemporary aesthetics.

The second part of the first chapter is perhaps less original for those familiarised with contemporary analytic aesthetics. This is because it basically summarises the contemporary debate in analytic aesthetics concerning what art is. The readers, however, should be careful in following this section, as Corse, when addressing this debate, is not as precise as in the earlier part. This is because, in the first place, her interpretation of Weitz's theory against definitions of art, is presented as proto-institutionalist of sorts, something for which there should be serious reservations (at least if no further justification is provided). Also her summary of this debate in terms of Davies' distinction between functional and procedural definitions, as if this was an already accepted distinction, is perhaps taken a bit too eagerly, as settling the distinction between the different types of definitions of art in current analytic aesthetics. Perhaps the most interesting reflection of this section is the parallel Corse draws (first proposed by Metcalf) between the Artworld and the Craftworld. In doing so, she attempts to reflect about craft objects in terms similar to those of Danto, Dickie or Davies when theorising about art. That is to say, she is interested in reflecting about craft in terms of its being a social activity that depends upon and allows for the creation of social networks of influence, the trans-

mission of tradition and the cultural development of society.

The second chapter is entirely dedicated to Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. This is perhaps one of the most interesting and well-argued chapters, as it combines a thorough explanation of Kant's theory with a well managed criticism against previous interpretations of Kant's *Kritik der Urteilkraft (KU)*. In this sense, this chapter is very relevant because Corse argues that Kant's *KU* has been and still is either the main theoretical basis for certain aesthetic theorists (or art critics such as Greenberg) when reflecting on art, or the main object of criticisms. This latter type of criticism accuses Kant on the grounds of providing the basis for an arbitrarily-biased modernist interpretation against non-aesthetic theories of art and against craft objects and practices. Corse argues that the latter is not the case at all because it is an incorrect interpretation of Kant's *KU*. Moreover, she also claims that those departing from Kant to theorise about art and aesthetics (the former group) have often also misinterpreted Kant's theory.

Thus, in the first place Corse stresses that Kant was not so much interested in art as in the aesthetic experience, first of nature and then of art. In the second place she also claims that, although Kant was interested in pure judgments, this was just for the sake of clarifying what a judgment is (i.e., for methodological reasons). But, she argues, Kant never claimed that in order to be valid, aesthetic judgments ought to be pure. Thus, for example, there are also mixed judgments (v.g., concerning adherent beauty) that were considered by him as also valid types of aesthetic judgments. In the third place, she insists that Kant brought examples from art as well as from craft (v.g., clothing and furniture) and functional design (v.g., wall-papers) when explaining the nature of pure judgments. Finally, when Kant talked about art, the distinction between

art and craft as understood today was not yet clearly settled, thus leading him also to consider together, cases of painting, gardening, architecture, furniture and clothing. All these remarks help Corse to dispel the interpretation of Kant's *KU* understood either as a descriptive or normative theory of aesthetic judgment (i.e., as if it were a *Critique of Pure Aesthetic Judgment*) or as a critique mainly related to pure art (i.e., as if it were a *Critique of Pure Art*) thus inapplicable to craft.

In the third chapter, Corse addresses Heidegger's theory, particularly that of «The Origin of the Work of Art» to reflect about craft. To develop this chapter, she previously summarises Heidegger's earlier theories of *Being and Time* and of «The Question Concerning Technology». She first examines Heidegger's reflections on tools and equipment to understand Heidegger's theory of *Dasein* as a Being-in-the-world necessarily engaged in a given network of social and practical relations. Secondly, she examines Heidegger's examples of art, in which either craft is obliquely mentioned (the peasant's shoes in Van Gogh's painting) or in which it is possible to establish an analogy with craft works (the Greek temple). Corse considers that Heidegger's conception about craft is not very different from that of Collingwood (i.e., craft as less relevant and creative than art). To counter this biased conception, she claims that actually craft ought not to be considered as simply something between things and art (i.e., as tools) as Heidegger seems to postulate. In fact, she claims that Heidegger, when referring to craft, is *actually* talking about ordinary tools (v.g., a hammer), rather than about Fine Craft. This is because she argues that Fine or Studio Craft is actually a type of art. Thus she finally claims that Heidegger's reflections that best suit Fine Crafts are those related to the example of the Greek temple (as craft-like artwork), rather than those related to examples of equipment such as a

hammer or the peasants boots (as mere craft-like equipment).

The reason for also considering Heidegger is because Corse attempts to go beyond the aesthetic conception of craft suggested in the previous chapter about Kant's theory, in order to stress the role of craft in both disclosing and creating a world (as in Van Gogh's painting and the Greek temple, respectively). In doing so, she also defends the role of Fine Craft in revealing better than works of Fine Art, the struggle between world and earth, because both the materials and the traditional networks of social meanings and interactions are central in these types of objects.

However, even if Corse succeeds in providing good reasons for understanding works of Fine Craft as both disclosing and revealing worlds, as art does, nevertheless towards the end it becomes disappointingly clear that she has been actually unable to *really* talk about craft (as «the other» of art). This is because, on the one hand, she stresses that works of Fine Craft have the same functions as Van Gogh's painting and, more particularly, the Greek temple *qua* artworks that they are. On the other hand, because she stresses on several occasions that Fine Craft *actually is a type of art*. Thus in the chapter about Heidegger, Corse is covering the fact that she is merely summarising Heidegger's theory of art (i.e., of craft *qua* art). In doing so, she is thus indirectly endorsing Collingwood's and Heidegger notion of non-artistic craft, as «the other» of art understood as less relevant than art (i.e., craft as mere tools or equipments destined to be used but lacking imaginative creativity and of covering truth rather than being «truth-setting-itself-into-work»). Nevertheless, it has to be said also that Corse summarises Heidegger's theory of art in a heuristically-clear and suggestive manner. So this chapter will anyway be useful for those interested in both understanding Heidegger's theories of art

and to have a better understanding of works of craft artists (*qua* art makers) as also revealing and generating worlds.

The fourth chapter is about Adorno's philosophy of art. Differently from the other chapters, this one is not addressed to point out Adorno's references to works of craft nor to clarify his position in relation to them, as Corse does more or less successfully with Kant's and Heidegger's theories. In this chapter she attempts, instead, to show how Adorno's theory of art can be very useful for a theory of craft. This is because she claims that Adorno's position concerning certain notions, such as those of materiality, historicity, heterogeneity and mimesis, can be easily applied to works of craft as well.

However, even if Adorno's philosophy of art might be suggestive for a philosophy of craft, and even though this chapter also presents a thorough examination and a good knowledge of Adorno's theories, in terms of the overall idea of the book, this is the weakest chapter. The reason for this is that, owing to the fact that Adorno doesn't mention craft in his reflections, it seems either as if Corse, as an excuse to talk about craft, has chosen Adorno basically to show her mastery of the author, or as if she would be claiming that Adorno's theory is *de facto* a theory of craft (or alternatively a plausible basis for a theory of craft). Perhaps this is why she sometimes switches the term «Studio Craft» for that of «serious craft» to better defend that it is akin to Adorno's notion of «serious art». However, the idea that Adorno would find craft as an acceptable type of art is something for which we should have serious reservations given Adorno's criticism of consumerist society and his stressing of the autonomy of art. This points towards the idea that the chapter on Adorno is an unnecessary *addendum* to this book, unless the author could *conclusively* demonstrate that Adorno would have accepted craft as art. This is what Corse continuously argues

to be the case, but this claim seems to be completely unjustified owing to Adorno's particular elitist view concerning art. Additionally, it is not possible here, as it actually was in Heidegger's theory, to easily consider that, owing to the fact that Fine Craft is a branch of art, his reflections about art are thus also applicable to Fine Craft. This doesn't seem plausible with Adorno because of his normative conception of art which segregates serious art, as *real* art, from the other types of arts (probably also Fine Craft) as a simple entertainment or as being simply objects for consumption.

To conclude, this book will be attractive to those interested in having a better understanding of Kant's, Heidegger's and Adorno's theories by revisiting them from a different critical standpoint. It will also be attractive to those interested in having a better understanding of those craft theories, works and practices surrounding the craftworld. It is true that the contributions to a theory of craft, by

Heidegger's and above all Adorno's theories, are not always very clear. Nevertheless, it is an interesting and suggestive first attempt to provide the theory of craft with a philosophical basis from solid philosophical figures, something for which, even if it is a risky move, has its merits because it attempts to correct the traditional prejudice in philosophy against craft. Although the future success of this attempt is still unclear, any attempt, such as Corse's, to enrich the debate concerning the relations between art and craft with serious philosophical tools and analysis is always welcome. Above all, it is welcome if this gives freshness to the philosophical panorama that regrettably tends to mimic a philosophical conception of art that traditionally and unjustifiably is dismissive of craft and those practices surrounding the craftworld.

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KONNERSMANN, Ralf (2008)  
*Kulturkritik*  
Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 137 p.

Hi ha actualment a Alemanya, per part d'autors especialitzats en filosofia de la cultura, un nou interès per la crítica. Aquest és el cas de Ralf Konnersmann, professor de la Universitat Christian-Albert de Kiel, i autor de diverses obres, entre elles la direcció del *Diccionari de les metàfores filosòfiques*, i de la publicació *Zeitschrift für Kulturphilosophie*.

Dels diferents aspectes tractats en els primers capítols d'aquest llibre curt però intens, dos resulten especialment interessants per a un lector del segle XXI. En primer lloc, la determinació del tipus de societat en la qual ha estat possible que sorgís la crítica de la cultura; això és: en

societats dinàmiques, amb estructures de gran complexitat, on hi ha una consciència del llenguatge, i que són capaces de reflexionar sobre si mateixes. Aquestes condicions són les que s'han produït en les cultures occidentals.

En segon lloc, l'autor posa especial èmfasi a explicar el principal canvi que la crítica de la cultura ha experimentat en els darrers anys: ha deixat de ser l'exercici d'un grup d'experts que es considerava que estaven en possessió de la veritat, o que usaven millor la raó, o que tenien un major coneixement de la història, i ha passat a ser una activitat que qualsevol ciutadà pot exercir, usant els més diversos mitjans i registres.